

Questions for Nebraska Department of Education's RFP NDE-12-449-01			
Question #	Page(s) #	Section(s)	Question(s)
1	34	A.3.b	How many days should vendors plan to be available for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Technical Committee meetings? State Assessment Advisory Group meetings? Potentially, there are four days total.
2	36	B.1.a.a)	Should vendor assistance with editing items include some level of content review? If yes, what degree of content review would NDE prefer? Yes, fairly significant.
3	37	B.1.c	Please confirm that NDE would like to have Spanish versions of Reading, Math, and Science administered online as well as on paper, pending district preference. Should vendors provide field-test items in Spanish? Yes.
4	37	B.1.d	Please clarify if Writing field-test prompts should be provided in Spanish for any grades. No.
5	37	B.1.e. and f	Will NDE provide field test items and prompts for field testing? Yes.
6	37	B.1.f	Are practice tests made up of items that have been newly developed or previously tested? Previously tested.
7	37	B.1. g	What is the desired length of the practice test for each level? Does NDE wish to keep the existing practice tests, refresh with new items, or develop completely new practice tests? Examples of the Practice Tests can be found on our website at: http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Reading.htm http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Math.htm http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Science.htm http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/Alternate_Assessment.htm Revised practice tests will be developed over the next five years.
8	38	B.4	How many days should vendors budget for form-building sessions with NDE per test? Will vendors be involved in assisting with item selection and ordering for the different field-test versions? Reading and Mathematics require five days each for form-building sessions. Science requires three days for form-building.
9	38	B.4.b	Please clarify "an operational form per year per subject." Should vendors include costs for every grade-level test per subject per year? Yes. Grades 3 through 8 and 11 are tested each year in Reading and Math. Grades 4, 8, and 11 are tested each year in Writing. Grades 5, 8, and 11 are tested each year in Science.
10	39	C.3.b	Please clarify the requirements for large-print test materials. Should they be photo-enlarged to 11x17 or composed in a certain font size

			(e.g., 18 pt. font on 11x17)? If composed, please provide the font size required. Large print is provided by reproducing the original using magnification at a copy machine on 11x17 paper.
11	40	C.4.1	Should vendors include costs for Spanish versions of any ancillary materials, like test administrator manuals for online and paper versions? If yes, please provide a list of the materials that should have Spanish translation versions. Yes. Individual Student Reports.
12	43	F.2.c	Please describe the district score verification process. The verification process consists of scores submitted by districts to NDE for reconsideration. Districts submit individual student scores and essays to a committee selected by NDE to review and verify or change the score in question. The contractor reviews the training process with NDE adjudicators at the start of the verification process. The process used by districts to select papers for score verification is determined by the individual districts.
13	46	H.1.f	Please clarify if one Technical Report is needed for both the standard and alternate assessments documentation or if one Technical Report is needed for the regular assessments only. They are separate.
14	46	H.1.f	Please provide a most recent Technical Report for the alternate assessments. The Alternate Science, Mathematics and Reading Technical reports are on the Assessment website at: http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/Alternate_Assessment.htm
15	48	J.3.b.	Please clarify which other content areas and types of questions NDE would like to see added to the C4L system. To be determined.
16	N/A	General	What amount of items can be reused for the alternate assessments from year to year? Approximately 30%.
17	N/A	General	Are the same raw-to-scale conversion tables used for the online and paper versions of the tests? If yes, was a study completed to support this? If a study was completed, would the State provide the study report? Yes. http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Reading.htm It is entitled "2011 NeSA Comparability Study Results – Reading and Mathematics (Jan 2012)" found under "NeSA Reading Technical Reports" heading.
18	N/A	General	Are the same raw-to-scale conversion tables and cut scores used for the English and Spanish versions of the tests? If yes, was a study completed to support this? If a study was completed, would the State provide the study report? Yes. Same scale. No study.
19	N/A	General	Should vendors provide pricing for some percentage of art/graphic development for NeSA teacher-written items? Yes.

20	N/A	General	<p>Please provide the following alternate assessment specifications for each test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of operational items • Number of linking items • Number of field-test items and versions • Number of passages to be provided (broken down by poetry, information, narrative) <p>Approximate number of operational items: Alternate Reading 175 Alternate Mathematics 205 Alternate Science 80</p> <p>Approximate number of linking items: 30% of operational totals Approximate numbers of field-test items: 16 per each test Number of passages: 0</p>
21	43	f.2.a.c)	<p>Will scoring of Spanish language responses to Spanish versions of NeSA-Writing require separate development of Spanish benchmark and exemplar papers, or will English benchmark and exemplars require translation to Spanish, or will bilingual scorers work directly from English benchmark and exemplar papers when scoring responses in Spanish?</p> <p>Bilingual Scorers work directly from English bench mark and exemplar papers when scoring the responses in Spanish.</p>
22	N/A	General	<p>Please provide the item bank inventories for standard and alternate assessments broken down by grade and content. What is the format of items in the existing item bank?</p> <p>Approximate counts: Number of items is fairly evenly spread over each grade level.</p> <p>Standard assessments:</p> <p>Science 900 items; grades 5, 8, 11 Mathematics 3700 items; grades 3-8, 11 Reading 2600 items; grades 3-8, 11 Writing 15 items; grades 4, 8, 11</p> <p>Alternate assessments:</p> <p>Reading 175 items; grades 3-8, 11 Science 80 items; grades 5, 8, 11 Mathematics 210 items; 3-8, 11</p> <p>NeSA Item bank items are available XML, PDF, or TXT.</p>
Question #	Page(s) #	Section(s)	Question(s)
1	30	Fifth paragraph	<p>NDE discusses practice tests for each content area and their release. Under the current contract, one practice form was developed and released at the inception of operational testing for each content area. Will practice tests become unique to each administration or will one practice test per content be released for the duration of this contract?</p> <p>Projected: One new practice test for each subject area for the duration</p>

			of the contract.
2	32	Third paragraph under Data	How will classrooms be defined for reporting purposes? Does the NSSRS identify the classroom groupings required for reports? NSSRS has a student/teacher connection.
3	41	D Shipping Requirements	The RFP indicates materials will be shipped directly to schools. How will NDE supply school contact information for shipping? File upload.
4	44	G	Are reports required at the classroom level? No.
		RFP Contractual Services Form	The RFP states, "Bidder should submit one (1) original and six (6) copies of the entire proposal." However, on page 4 of the RFP, under subheading H, it states, "To facilitate the proposal evaluation process, one (1) original, clearly identified as such, and five (5) copies of the entire proposal should be submitted." Please clarify the number of copies that should be submitted. One original and six copies.
1	30		The RFP states, "Other accommodations for ELL students are an optional item." What other accommodations have been provided in the past? Does the NDE desire any other accommodations in particular? Here is the accommodation link: http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Accommodations.htm Click on "NeSA Approved Accommodations Document". No accommodations in particular.
2	33		The RFP states, "All electronic and hard copy materials developed for this project ... are the sole property of the NDE and will not be copyrighted, resold, or reused by the contractor." a. Does this language imply that pre-existing contractor source code, if incorporated in the solution for NDE, will become the sole property of NDE or does NDE seek an unrestricted license of the source code for the purposes of this program? b. Does this language imply that newly-developed source code will become the sole property of NDE? NDE will be the owner of electronic and hard copy materials. Does not apply to testing client developed by the vendor.
3	35	6b	Does the NDE have a preferred method for minimizing infrastructure and bandwidth demands for districts? No.
4	35	6b	Are there existing documents or reports that provide baseline information on district capacity that can be shared with bidders? No.
5	37	2a	Does the NDE have the capability of transferring items and tasks in a standard interoperable format (APIP/QTI, SCORM, etc.)? Yes.
6	38	3	Approximately what percentage of students in ELL and SWD categories take the paper/pencil version of the NeSA regular test? 15-20%

7	38	4c	<p>Can the NDE make the current table of specifications regarding selection and ordering of items on test forms available to bidders?</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Tables of specifications posted at:</p> <p>http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Reading.htm</p> <p>http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Math.htm</p> <p>http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Science.htm</p> <p>http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/Alternate_Assessment.htm</p>
8	38	4	<p>How many forms per assessment/grade/year are administered?</p> <p>One form per grade per subject in regular assessments.</p>
9	42	2b	<p>How often are tests re-graded, i.e., what percentage of tests are re-graded per administration as a result of invalid scores? What is the basis for determining an invalid score?</p> <p>During the grading, reader (rater) reliability checks are conducted daily. Papers scored inaccurately by a rater would be placed back into the system to be rescored. The percent rescored would depend up the accuracy of a particular group of scorers.</p>
10	43	1b	<p>What are the “reporting requirements” being referred to here that impact the methodology of creating a reporting scale?</p> <p>Scale score required for total scores.</p>
11	44	7ii	<p>Please clarify what the NDE means by “test taking time” and specific “results” against which this will be compared?</p> <p>Correlation of time student used to complete the test to the student score.</p>
12			<p>Is the NDE expecting the vendor to perform an editorial review of existing item content?</p> <p>No.</p>
13			<p>Will the NDE consider alternative methods than those stated in the RFP for distributing/administering/scoring the paper/pencil tests if those methods may have benefits to the NDE?</p> <p>Yes.</p>
14			<p>Does the NDE anticipate that the same NeSA test form (per grade and subject) would be used throughout the 6-week testing period in late March to early May, and for both paper/pencil and computer-based modes of administration?</p> <p>Yes.</p>
15			<p>Does the NDE have a preference for an IRT model? What model(s) and calibration software are currently in use?</p> <p>To be determined.</p>
Question #	Page(s) #	Section(s)	Question(s)
1		Cover Page	<p>The address noted to submit the RFP is a post office box. Since couriers do not deliver to post office box numbers, is there a street address to which we can submit our proposal?</p> <p>301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68508-2529</p>

2		Technology for All Assessments including C4L d. District Access to NeSA Assessment Information	What are the transforming obligations that Pearson must meet for delivery? Selected contractor must transform items from the current system to its own system successfully for NDE use for statewide NeSA testing according to NDE timeline.
3			Are teachers able to select their own items in C4L? Yes.
4		Technology for All Assessments including C4L d. District Access to NeSA Assessment Information	Who is responsible for notifying appropriate parties of changes and who are the parties to be notified? A change report should be generated automatically through technology when changes are made. The party notified will be determined by the level of the change.
5			Can the state please provide a sample of each item type for each grade and subject in the format(s) that the item bank will be transferred to the successful bidder? Practice tests are available online at: http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Reading.htm http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Math.htm http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Science.htm http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/Alternate_Assessment.htm
6		3. Paper/pencil Assessments for NeSA Regular and Alternate Assessments	What percentage of tests for ELLs and for students with disabilities need to be provided on paper? Approximately 15-20%. See question #22 on page 3.
8			How many items does NDE have in their bank, by grade and subject? What is the status of these items in terms of appropriate standards alignment, DOK level, statistical information, and availability of the items for use on new forms? The items in the item bank meet the above terms.
9		2 c	Please clarify the meaning of 'score verification' and provide details on the expectations of the outcome of the 'one-day workshop'. The verification process consists of scores submitted by districts to NDE for reconsideration. Districts submit individual student scores and essays to a committee selected by NDE to review and verify or change the score in question. The contractor reviews the training process with NDE adjudicators at the start of the verification process.
10			Please clarify what is meant by "test taking time compared to results" Correlation of time student used to complete the test to the student score.

11	45	H.1.a.e	Please elaborate/clarify the information that needs to be contained in the confidential student-level database. Information given in the RFP.
12			Are the item banks which will be transferred to the successful bidder XML-based? NeSA Item bank items are available XML, PDF, or TXT.
13			Question about item bank/types/format-QTI format? What is NDE's version of QTI? We would like to see a sample and supporting items, passages, etc. Topic not covered in RFP.
14			"Please provide details about how the Rasch IRT model was used to calibrate the grade 8 & 11 writing tests. Specifically, what software was used to implement the equating (Winsteps/Facets/???), what model was used (the technical manual mentions that multi-faceted, rating scale, weighted, and unweighted models were all considered), and how was the underlying theta scale anchored (e.g., Rasch difficulties means fixed at zero, and standard deviation at one, examinee abilities mean fixed at zero and standard deviation at one, or something else?) Topic not covered in RFP.
15			Please provide details concerning the equating of future grade 8 & 11 writing tests to the current writing scale established in 2012. For example, what is the current plan to equate the 2013 writing results to the scale and cutpoints that were established in 2012 given that there will neither be common items nor examinees between 2012 and 2013? Writing tests are equated through use of the rubric and skilled raters.
16			Please provide a copy of the technical manual for the Current Alt tests. If this is not possible, please provide a detailed explanation of the procedures used to scale the Alt assessments and to equate them from year to year. Alternate tests are equated with linking items.
17	30-31		Please confirm that the C4L system is for approximately 150,000 students in grades 3-8 and 11. Yes, but districts may add students from non-tested grades to the system.
18	30-31		Please confirm that the C4L system will be implemented in 177 districts (as opposed to 249). Determined on a year-by-year basis.
19	34	4.A.4	Please confirm whether the November implementation date for C4L is 2013 or 2014. 2013
20	30, 36		Are the items in the bank to be provided to the successful vendor usable on a future test or will it include items that need to go through item or bias review processes? Yes, provided, except for field-tested items.
21		General / passages	What is the desired ratio of informational to literary passages? 50/50

22	36		Are the 16 to 18 questions provided by NDE for the alternative assessments items that are newly-written by teachers? Or are these questions derived from previously approved teacher-written questions for the regular assessments that need to retain their link to the original items? Original items are written by Nebraska teachers.
23	45		Does NDE foresee needing to extend the “earliest possible date” for delivering the Individual Student Reports based on changes in scoring (moving strictly from an MC test near the end of the year to including human-scored items)? Jim: we should not ask this. Base bid is for MC only. No response from NDE.
24		General	The practice tests on the NDE website for both math and science show that no calculators are allowed. Is this the correct policy assumption for all development at all grades? If not, what is the policy? Yes, no calculators.
Question #	Page(s) #	Section(s)	Question(s)
1			How many field test slots are in each test per grade/subject area? Each grade has 50; each student answers 10.
2	37	B.1.a.c	In what format can we receive the existing items and associated data? To be determined.
3	29		Page 29 indicates that the current contract for NeSA and C4L is 5 million dollars. Does this include the NeSA Alternate? Yes.
4	36		Page 36 indicates that 16-18 items per content area and grade level will be provided each year for the alternate assessment. Are these the common items or are these the new items to be embedded for field testing? Can you provide the current test design (number of common items and number of field tested items per grade and content) and indicate if you provide multiple forms of the test to the field? Two forms of 25-30 items per grade level per subject. Sixteen field tested items, each student answers eight. Field tested items are embedded in the tests.
5	37		Page 37 indicates that the contractor will be responsible for converting current test items to the contractor’s system. Please provide the number of items currently in the pool that will need conversion for the alternate assessment. Approximately 1500 items.
6			Please confirm that the alternate assessment will not be translated into Spanish. This is true.
7			Please clarify whether or not the constructed response/ performance items are being considered for the alternate assessment. To be determined.

8			<p>Please indicate the preferred format for the alternate assessment test booklets. Is there a teacher booklet and a separate student booklet, and if so what size is the student booklet?</p> <p>Alternate assessment has separate teacher and student booklets. They are both 8 ½ x 11 in size.</p>
9	39		<p>Please indicate whether or not large print and Braille tests are required for the alternate assessment.</p> <p>They are not required.</p>
10	46		<p>Please confirm whether or not a Spanish template for the alternate assessment ISR is required.</p> <p>Yes.</p>
11	46-47		<p>Based on the schedule on page 46-47 new assessment items will be developed to the new standards. Please indicate the number of items that will be developed when the test transitions for the first time in order to be able to appropriately budget for the item reviews by the contractor.</p> <p>To be determined. Current tests have approximately 50 multiple-choice per grade per subject.</p>
12			<p>What system do teachers use for item authoring during item writing workshops?</p> <p>Teachers write the items in a secure setting.</p>
13			<p>Does NDE expect contractor involvement in conducting item writing workshops?</p> <p>No.</p>
14			<p>We understand the test items are teacher created. What involvement will the contractor have in item writing workshops? What involvement will the contractor have in item development?</p> <p>No involvement in development, some in content level review.</p>
15	30	Paragraph 6	<p>Please identify secondary analyses expected to be conducted related to security and Also to policy formation.</p> <p>To be determined.</p>
16	32 36	Paragraph 5; A.5.e	<p>Which tablets is NDE considering for online testing?</p> <p>To be determined.</p>
17	33	A.1.a	<p>Does NDE expect the Project Director be assigned to Nebraska full time?</p> <p>Yes.</p>
18	30		<p>Districts are able to schedule testing over a 6 week period. What is the expectation of maximum concurrent system use during this time?</p> <p>It is conceivable that every district in Nebraska could be connected at any given time with multiple sessions being conducted in each district.</p>
19	32	Technology	<p>When would Nebraska like to include the tablets?</p> <p>2014</p>
20	39	Student ID and Tracking	<p>Will the contractor need to handle updates to Student Identification and Tracking during the administration?</p> <p>The system will need to be available during administration for districts to make changes such as adding students.</p>